

Some Characteristic Maritime Diptera from the South end of Padre Island, and the Adjacent Texas Coast.—I.

By C. H. TYLER TOWNSEND.

In the Summer of 1895, during the month of June, the writer collected a few insects on the south end of Padre Island, which was visited on several occasions. This island belongs to the *Antillean* province, and to that fauna which should be known as the *Mexican Maritime*. The Diptera, especially, which occur here, bear a characteristic appearance indicative of the conditions of environment which surround them. They are mostly of a whitish or gray color, thus assimilating well with the stretches of sandy beach which they frequent. Some interesting species were collected here, as well as on the beach of the mainland.

TABANIDÆ.

1. *Tabanus maritimus* n. sp.—Length 10–10.5 mm. Differs from *T. psammophilus* O. S. as follows: Face gray, with white hairs; palpi white; first two antennal joints pale yellowish, the third brownish with annulate portion darker. Thorax black, clothed with white hairs, and with three grayish white pollinose vittæ. Abdomen evenly tapering to tip, blackish, hind edges of segments whitish yellow, the whole thickly clothed with a soft white pubescence. Legs pale yellowish, tips of tibiæ slightly brownish, tarsi hardly so. Wings whitish, the stump of a vein near origin of upper branch of third vein is well marked in two of the specimens, being as long as the basal section of the branch, but in the other it is exceedingly short and barely perceptible; posterior cells all open, none of them narrowed; halteres whitish yellow. Difference between the large and small facets of the eye is not marked, being gradual and slight, and the small facets cover an extensive area along posterior orbit, the large facets being confined to the inner central portion of the eye. In life this species presents a uniformly white appearance, being almost exactly the color of the sand and drift-wood upon which it habitually rests.

Three males, June 29, 1895, on logs and sand on beach, at south end of Padre Island, Texas.

T. psammophilus was taken by Hubbard and Schwarz on the sea-beach of the Florida coast, at Fort Capron. Mrs. Slosson has recently taken it at Lake Worth, Florida (det. Johnson).

It is quite possible that *T. nanus* Mcq., described from Texas, is identical with the present species. But should this be the case, the name *nanus* is preoccupied, as already pointed out by Osten Sacken, and cannot be retained. The size, 4 lines (= 8 mm.), more nearly coincides with the present specimens than with

psammophilus. The present species is certainly distinct from *psammophilus* in the character of the facets of the eye in the ♂, as well as in the other points mentioned. It should be stated that there is no distinct process at base of third antennal joint, there being nothing more than a slight swelling which hardly affects the symmetry of the basal portion.

EPHYDRIDÆ.

2. *Lipochæta texensis* n. sp.—Length 3 to slightly over 4 mm. Differs from the description of *L. slossonæ* Coq. as follows: Head is even broader than thorax. Clypeus projecting fully the length of face. Front nearly as wide as oral opening in one specimen, in the other somewhat narrower; scutellum in one specimen one-third, in the other fully one-half as long as thorax. Claws are distinct, slender, and a little elongate, but not large or stout. The third and fourth veins converge toward their tips, but not strongly so. This fly may prove to be inseparable specifically from *slossonæ*, but it will at least form a good variety, from its larger size, longer scutellum, etc.

Two specimens, June 8, 1895. Taken on moist beach at south end of Padre Island.

This is a sleek, densely whitish-pollinose, glossy ephydrid, of a very peculiar aspect. It occurred in large numbers on stretches of moist beach on the south end of Padre Island. The specimens were taken and observed just after a rain, and while a heavy wind was blowing. They flew up in numbers as one approached, but rose only an inch or so from the sand. The whole insect, save for the dorsal brownish pollinose portion, presents a marked whitish appearance, including the wings, so that it is very difficult to detect it when alighted on the moist sand of the beach, the white and brown tints assimilating well with the colors of the beach.

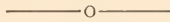
The Florida species has similar habits, and is doubtless a maritime or shore species. It is from Punta Gorda.

The genus *Lipochæta*, described recently by Coquillett for the Florida species (ENT. NEWS, September, 1896), is truly one of singular aspect and anomalous position, though clearly allied to the Ephydridæ. It is, however, totally different in several important respects from that family as at present characterized. The excessively short face, greatly widened and enlarged oral cavity, the projecting clypeus showing in a wide semi-circle; the elongate, flattened, and widened head, wedge-shaped in profile;

the wide front, round eyes and minute antennæ; all these taken together, with the absence of all bristles, give this fly from a front view a striking appearance, which can only be described as "frog-mouthed" or "frog-faced."

In the shape of the head, this genus bears a considerable resemblance to *Pteremis nivalis* Haliday. The appearance of the head from above is almost exactly the same, but the profile view at once shows marked differences.

The striking similarity in the maritime faunas of the south Texas and Florida coasts, indicated by such forms as *Macrancylus*, *Oxaxis*, etc., among the Coleoptera, is thus seen to be borne out also by the Diptera in *Tabanus maritimus* and *psammophilus*, *Lipochæta*, etc.



AN INSECT-CATCHING PLANT.

By C. P. GILLETTE, Fort Collins, Colo.

Any one who has attempted to collect the pretty blue flowers from *Lactuca pulchella* must have been annoyed by the disagreeable sticky exudation that covers the buds and stems near the flowers, and probably the latter were soon thrown away in disgust. This plant grows in great profusion along the railroad track near the college grounds at Fort Collins, where it vies with the entomological enthusiasts in the insect captures that it makes. In a few minutes' time this afternoon I noticed the following insects stuck fast, and for the most part dead, in the gummy exudation above mentioned :

Hymenoptera.

Chalybion cæruleum
Ambyletes subrufus
Myrmica lobicornis
Formica fusca
 " *integra*
Chrysis sp.

Coccinella 9-notata
 " *sanguinea*
Næmia episcopalis
Scymnus sp.
Trirhabda canadensis
Ellychnia corrusca
Epicauta cinerea.

Coleoptera.

Hippodamia convergens
 " *sinuata*

Odonata.

Lestes congener.

There were also several species of Diptera and parasitic Hymenoptera as well as other species of ants that I did not know.